

## Stockton 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Scholarship Benefit Gala Nets Over \$300,000 to Help Students

Event Held April 25 at Stockton Seaview Hotel and Golf Club

***For Immediate Release; with photos on [flickr](#) and [video](#)***

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**Contact: Maryjane Briant**  
**News and Media Relations Director**  
**Galloway Township, NJ 08205**  
**Maryjane.Briant@Stockton.edu**  
**(609) 652-4593**

**Galloway Township, NJ** - Over 500 guests helped Stockton University students tonight at the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Stockton University Scholarship Benefit Gala by raising a net amount of over \$300,000 for the Stockton Foundation.

"Scholarships for our students have been a top priority for me since I came to Stockton," President Herman Saatkamp told donors. "So tonight, we're celebrating your support of our students, and their success."

"The Stockton University Foundation has grown tremendously in the last few years," President Saatkamp added. "In 2003, we had less than \$3 million in assets. We're now approaching close to \$29 million."

Gala net proceeds go to the Stockton Benefit Gala Endowed Scholarship Fund, which prior to tonight's event had grown to over \$2.9 million. Some 70 students received scholarships totaling \$80,000 last year from the endowed fund, which continues to grow.

"We plan to provide even more Stockton students with the opportunity to fulfill their academic promise in the coming year by awarding over \$100,000 in scholarships from the fund," said Dr. Philip Ellmore, chief development officer and executive director of the Foundation. "Through the dedication and hard work of many in the extended Stockton community, the Foundation was in a position to award over \$600,000 in scholarships this year, thanks to proceeds from the Gala as well as from individual donors."

Several scholarship recipients told their stories in a video shown at the event held at Stockton Seaview Hotel and Golf Club in Galloway, NJ.

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“Education means the world to me - it’s my starting point and without it, my future goals would seem impossible,” said Deanna Jackson, a sophomore from Ewing, NJ, majoring in Social Work with a concentration in Child Welfare and a minor in Africana Studies. She received a Council of Black Faculty & Staff Scholarship.

Naomi Madden of Barnegat, NJ, a senior majoring in Anthropology and Psychology and minoring in Jewish Studies, received the G. Larry James Legacy Scholarship and the Abraham Soltz Memorial Scholarship. “I am just so thankful for all of the different scholarships that I have been given by Stockton University,” she said, “and they have really impacted my ability to attend school here.” She said her family had moved 16 times in her 23 years, which did not allow them to save for college.

Caleb Bayewu, Maywood, NJ, a junior majoring in Biochemistry, said he was born in Nigeria and moved to the United States when he was 5 years old. He received a Council of Black Faculty & Staff Scholarship and said he plans to go to medical school after he finishes his undergraduate degree, which would not be possible without the help of scholarships.

Rick Walker, Chair of the Stockton Foundation and a scholarship donor, explained the importance of giving: “My wife, Millie, and I believe in the power of education and in higher education. Stockton University plays an important role in the community and provides opportunities for our students so they can do better things in the world. We enjoy being a part of that for Stockton students.”

Guests circulated and enjoyed live entertainment and special menus in each of four spaces at the Stockton Seaview, an innovative format for the Gala this year.

“I love the new format,” said Maureen Shay of Margate, who operates the Knife & Fork Inn, Dock’s Oyster House and Harry’s Oyster Bar with her husband, Frank Dougherty and his family. “It’s fun and conducive to a lot more socializing. People like to do things that are less formal and to interact more.”

Lois Fried of Margate, a partner in Capaldi Reynolds & Pelosi P.A., one of the Gala’s sponsors, and a member of the Stockton Business Advisory Board, said she was seeing “lots of new people, and the food and entertainment are outstanding.”

Unique entertainment included a sword swallower, a balloon eater and a woman who twirled batons of fire and swallowed them - all from the Philadelphia School of Circus Arts.

Guests entering the lobby were greeted by “Crimson Carpetta,” aka Karin Ekberg of Bristol, Pa., who appeared to be 10 feet tall in her flaming red costume, which covered the elevated platform on which she stood. Ekberg was with East Coast Entertainment, which also supplied musical entertainment.

There were dueling pianos in one room, an acoustic duo in another, a string quartet playing everything from classics to classic rock, and a high-energy cover band for dancing.

A fifth room was dedicated to the silent auction, chaired by Lisa Johnson of Lisa Johnson Communications. For the first time, guests could use their mobile phones to update their bids without returning to the auction room.

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Among the auction items this year were:

- A 'Chef in Your Home' experience provided by Steve & Cookie's By the Bay, which included dinner planning with Stockton alumna Cookie Till, and dinner prepared for up to eight guests in your home.
- An associate membership for the 2015 golf season at Stockton Seaview, where the newly renovated Pines Course offers 18 holes of challenging play in the scenic pinelands, while the Bay Course offers stunning views of the bay and Atlantic City skyline.

Students from the "Events Management and Catering" course in Stockton's Hospitality and Tourism Management program were among the many volunteers at the Gala, and snapped pictures as guests entered on the red carpet.

This year the Gala's Chair's Circle sponsors are: Avalon Flooring, Dolce Hotels & Resorts, IBEW Local 351, Marathon Engineering & Environmental Services Inc. and SOSH Architects.

Dr. Howard and Gayle Gross and the Cooper Levenson law firm are the Summa Cum Laude sponsors, while Magna Cum Laude sponsors include: the Azeez Foundation, Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa, Chartwells, Dr. Jo Frances Stow, the Follett Higher Education Group, the Gomes Family and UA Local Union 322 of southern New Jersey, which represents plumbers, pipefitters and HVAC service technicians.

Cum Laude sponsors include: Atlantic County Utilities Authority, AtlantiCare, Atrium Health & Senior Living, Calvi Electric Company, Capaldi Reynolds & Pelosi, P.A., D'Amato Law Firm, Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC, Ernest Bock & Sons, Inc, Fox Rothschild LLP, Fulton Bank of New Jersey, Kramer Beverage Company, L. Feriozzi Concrete Company, Laborers Local 77, Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters, Dean and Zoe Pappas, Pennoni Associates Inc., Pennsylvania Trust, Pepsi Beverage Company, Quantum Capital Management, L.L.C., .Ray Angelini, Inc., Resorts Casino Hotel, Shore Medical Center, South Jersey Industries, Steel Pier, Steve & Cookie's By the Bay, The Press of Atlantic City, T.N. Ward Company, Walt's Original Primo Pizza and Wells Fargo Bank N.A.

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